CHAPTER IV: VESSEL TRAFFIC ADMINISTRATION

A. CONTINUUM OF CONTROL.

VTS works on four levels of a continuum of control as described here.

1. Monitor.

Watchstanders use radar, CCTV, radio communications and any other available means to maintain an accurate picture of vessel traffic within the AOR. "Monitoring traffic" means keeping aware of current and future activities and vessel movements in the AOR.

(a) Reports directly to VTS.

Watchstanders shall document these reports as prescribed in the VTS Operational Procedures Manual.

(b) Passing arrangements.

Watchstanders shall, to the best of their abilities, monitor passing arrangements between vessels.

(c) Operational plans.

Watchstanders shall keep abreast of vessels' and commercial and public agencies' operational plans in the AOR as much as possible.

(1) VHF-FM channel 10.

This designated commercial-use frequency is monitored by VTS as a means of keeping abreast of San Francisco Bar Pilots and Marine Exchange communications.

(2) Telephone inquiries.

The supervisor shall make telephone calls to appropriate agencies to find out about expected or delayed vessel movements; law enforcement activities; construction or dredging operations; and any other known or suspected activities that may affect navigation in VTS's AOR.

2. Inform.

VTS shall inform vessel operators of factors affecting their transits far enough in advance so that vessel operators can effectively plan their transit routes and can make appropriate passing arrangements with other vessels so as to effect safe and efficient transits while adhering to traffic routing measures. It is the policy of VTS San Francisco to keep interactions with customers on the level of informing as much as possible.

3. Recommend.

VTS may recommend a course of action to a mariner when necessary. Recommendations shall be in the form of a desired outcome (e.g. "recommend you make passing arrangements with...) vice engine and rudder commands. VTS shall recommend a course of action to a vessel operator only after careful consideration of all factors involved and after discussing the situation with the involved parties.

4. Direct.

VTS watchstanders may direct a vessel only when necessary due to an emergent unsafe situation. Directions shall be in the form of a desired outcome vice engine and rudder commands. VTS may issue VTS Measures or VTS Directions. No watchstander shall issue a VTS Measure except by the direction of the watch supervisor. Controllers may issue VTS Directions as in paragraphs 4.(b)(1) and 4.(b)(2) at their own discretion. A VTS Direction in the form of 4.(b)(3) requires the watch supervisor's approval. In the event of a VTS Direction in the form of category 4.(b)(3) the supervisor shall notify the commanding officer.

(a) VTS Measures.

A VTS Measure is not directed at a specific vessel; it applies to any vessel transiting affected waters. Measures shall be in the form of a desired outcome vice engine and/or rudder commands.

(b) VTS Directions.

A VTS Direction is given to a specific vessel. Direction shall be in the form of a desired outcome.

(1) Direction to notify VTS.

VTS may direct a vessel operator to provide notification of specific conditions or arrival at specific positions.

(2) Direction to make contact.

VTS may direct a vessel operator to contact another vessel.

(3) Direction to operate the vessel in a specific way.

VTS may direct a vessel to operate or to not operate in a specific manner. This includes: specifying avoidance of a channel or route; directing a vessel to anchor; or directing a vessel to remain at a dock or anchorage.

(c) Issuing a VTS Measure or direction.

The following discussion refers to VTS Measures or to VTS Directions in the form of paragraph **4.(b)(3)**.

(1) Alternatives.

The supervisor must be convinced that no better alternatives exist.

(2) The nature of the direction.

(i) General terms.

VTS directions shall be stated in the form of a desired outcome.

(ii) Courses and speeds.

VTS shall not dictate a course or speed.

(iii) Specific actions.

Specific actions to be taken shall be left up to the mariner to the greatest extent possible.

B. AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY.

VTS's area of responsibility (AOR) encompasses: the ocean area within a 38-nautical-mile radius of Mount Tamalpais; the navigable sections of San Francisco Bay north of Dumbarton Bridge; San Pablo Bay including the Petaluma River markers 19 and 20 and below; Mare Island Strait as far as the Mare Island Causeway Bridge; and the waterways serving the ports of Redwood City, Stockton and Sacramento. This area, also known as the VTS area, is divided into sectors.

1. Ocean-Delta.

The Ocean-Delta controller handles all transactions in the Ocean-Delta sector. This sector comprises two sub-sectors.

a. Ocean sub-sector.

This sub-sector is all the ocean waters that are outside the COLREGS Line of Demarcation (33 CFR 80.1142) and within a 38-nautical-mile-radius circle that is centered on Mount Tamalpais. The arc of that circle's perimeter runs from just above Bodega Head in the north, through a point about 12 nautical miles west of the Southeast Farallon Islands to just north of Pescadero Point.

b. Delta sub-sector.

The Delta sub-sector includes the navigable waters from New York Point through the Sacramento Deep Water Ship Channel to the Port of Sacramento; and up the San Joaquin River and Stockton Deep Water Ship Channel to the Port of Stockton. It includes the waters of Broad Slough, Middle Slough, and Three-Mile Slough.